

LAUREL HILL HOUSE



Historic Structure Report & Treatment Options



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Historic Structure Report & Treatment Options

for
Fairfax County, Virginia

June 2008

**Frazier Associates, Architects & Planners
&
Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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Oversight Committee
Fairfax County Architectural Review Board
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Fairfax County Facilities Management Department



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Laurel Hill House is located within the Adaptive Reuse Area of the former Lorton Prison site in Fairfax County. The Adaptive Reuse Area is approximately 80 acres and is also part of a larger 511-acre District of Columbia Workhouse and Reformatory Historic District that was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in February 2006.

The Laurel Hill House is listed as a contributing structure to the historic district. It is currently owned by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Originally built circa 1787, it was the home of Major William Lindsay, who served in the Virginia Militia during the American Revolution. Beginning in the early 1900s, the house became part of the Lorton Prison site and served as home to the Superintendent of Lorton Prison. It has a significant relationship to two adjacent cultural resources being considered for improvements by Fairfax County: the former Lorton Reformatory and Penitentiary and the 1930s era neoclassical gardens (that are associated with the Laurel Hill House). Please refer to separate studies for information regarding these related projects.

The building is of wood frame construction with a masonry foundation. It is 1 1/2 stories with a partial basement and upper story spaces created by roof dormers. The area of the house is approximately 3900 square feet (not including the basement).

The structure of the circa 1787 original house still exists, but it has been absorbed within and obscured by numerous additions and alterations. Some of the additions have acquired architectural significance in their own right and are important because they reflect how the building has changed over time. The latest additions, such as the shed dormers and south bathroom addition, have questionable architectural significance. Interior alterations that date from the period of time when the house was used by the adjacent reformatory have damaged, removed or replaced most of the original interior historic fabric.

The house has been vacant since the 1970s and has received only minimal maintenance. As a result, the overall condition of the building ranges from fair to poor. In general, all of the finishes within the building are in need of restoration, repair or replacement. In addition, all of the building systems are in need of replacement. The exterior of the building also is in need of substantial work. An engineering evaluation found the structure of the building to be in serviceable condition.

Three treatment options were developed after receiving input from a committee consisting of County Staff and local citizens. Treatment Option 1 proposes a restoration of the eighteenth century house with a new addition designed to accommodate modern needs. Treatment Option 2 proposes a rehabilitation of the building in its current configuration. Treatment Option 3 proposes an interpretation of the site and foundation after a selective demolition of the house down to the masonry foundation.

Estimated total project cost for Option 1 is estimated to be \$1,515,000 (\$497 per square foot).

Estimated total project cost for Option 2 is estimated to be \$1,772,000 (\$382 per square foot).

Estimated total project cost for Option 3 is estimated to be \$366,000 (\$79 per square foot).